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**Testimony of Deborah J. Fuller
Judiciary Committee Public Hearing
February 24, 2014**

**S.B. 54, An Act Concerning Collaboration between Boards of Education and
Law Enforcement Personnel**

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox, Senator Kissel, Representative Rebimbas and members of the Judiciary Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony, on behalf of the Judicial Branch, in support of **S.B. 54, *AAC Collaboration between Boards of Education and Law Enforcement Personnel***.

The Judicial Branch supported the language in this bill during when it was first raised during the 2013 Legislative Session, and we continue to support it. It addresses the very important issue of school-based arrests by requiring local and regional boards of education to adopt policies, or enter into memoranda of understanding with law enforcement agencies, concerning the use of law enforcement personnel in schools. While school resource officers are in the schools primarily to protect students by ensuring a safe school environment, they do have the authority to arrest students. Experience shows that there are higher rates of arrest in schools with resource officers than those without them, and this has had an impact on our Juvenile Courts. Experience has also shown that having an agreement or policy in place to set clear guidelines and promote a graduated approach to school incidents has the effect of both reducing arrests and ensuring that arrests made at a school or a school-sponsored activity are appropriate.

I urge the Committee to act favorably on this proposal. Thank you for your consideration.